

HACKNEY HECKLER

TAKING THINGS ONE STEP FURTHER

FREE

No 7, March 1991

FIGHTING TO WIN

On March 31st last year 200,000 people marched through central London against the poll tax. One year on, over 10 million people haven't paid a penny of their poll tax and many millions more have only paid a bit.

Most of us see what the poll tax was meant to be — less money in our pockets! But it has come to mean much more: a focus for all our discontents — inflated prices in the shops, cuts in health, education and social services, job losses, the government, the police, and so on...

Last Straw

For many the poll tax is the last straw. We were promised that the 1980s were to be the "boom years", that we would all "get richer together". The rich did get richer — but the rest of us have seen little of this supposed "prosperity".

The 1980s were an extended con-trick. Those who believed the propaganda and bought their homes were never told about the hidden extras — rocketing interest rates, repossession, etc. The rest of us have faced constant rent increases, while repairs stayed unrepaired! Services were supposedly made more "efficient" by privatisation — we've just seen



Poll tax protestors

less of them. . . apart from increased bills.

Non-payment

But it's not all doom and gloom. The fight against the poll tax shows that we don't have to take things lying down. After a year of mass non-payment and resistance, the government is promising reforms — and they had to dump Thatcher! So a Prime Minister got the chop and they're now talking of change. But we've still got the poll tax, a Prime Minister, and a Gulf War — there's lots more needs changing!

This March there will be another huge demonstration against

the poll tax: a chance to show them that we still don't want it — new model, old model, it's just the same! And a chance to show them what we think about everything else they've thrown at us! But ordinary people are rightly cynical — just demonstrating doesn't bring about change. We've got to go beyond their limits: why just stop on the Saturday? What about returning on the Sunday, going on strike on the Monday. . . the only limit is our imagination. We shouldn't stop where they want us to — we should only stop once we've won!

**NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION
SATURDAY MARCH 23RD
12.00 AM
EMBANKMENT**

NEWS

BIG BROTHER

Very soon government snoopers will be asking us to fill in the 1992 census and give them details of who we are, what we do, how old we are, and so on. What business has the government got sticking its nose into our personal affairs, and why should we help people who ride on our backs? We're not filling the form in, and suggest you don't either. Tell Big Brother where to get off!

OUT OF TUNE

Jazz FM wisely decided to sack their top DJ Giles Peterson after he had the cheek to play peace songs and mention an anti-war rally on his show: obviously the subversive was intent on undermining the war to "Free Kuwait". Also, thank the Lord, those sensible people at the BBC have banned records like "Give Peace A Chance" and "Walk Like An Egyptian".

After all, the battle to "Free Kuwait", where a whole 6% of the men and none of the women have the vote, means we shouldn't take liberties with our own freedom.

RAVE ON!

There's going to be a massive anti-war get down on Saturday 16th March at the Triangle on Farleigh Road (N16). Lined up are five bands, including One Style and Bush House, 4 DJs — and there's a late licence to 3am. It's only £3.50/£3.00 to get in and kick-off is at 8pm: one not to be missed! There's also a disco/karaoke night at the Rose and Crown (on Mare Street) on Friday 29th March to celebrate one year of the "Hackney Heckler". Finally, the new "HSG Bulletin", our theoretical and practical magazine, has just come out — send 50p to HSG, PO Box 824, London, N1 9DL.

ANTI-FASCIST ACTION

Anti-Fascist Action have a picket-demo against the continuing Nazi presence in Brick Lane. Meet at Whitechapel tube 10am sharp on Sunday 17th March.

EMPIRE BUILDER

The nomination for the worst boss in Hackney must undoubtedly go to Captain Ahab Muldoon of the Hackney Empire.

Over the past four years the crew of this great ship have worked, slaved, sweated and yes even cried so that his vessel stayed afloat. Conditions on board were and still are draconian, with employment rights salty to the taste. Equal Opportunities are met with a nod and a wink — aye aye captain. If the crew organised for meetings, Captain Muldoon would throw tantrums, threatening to put everyone in irons or throw them overboard. Captain Muldoon has been responsible for the loss of a number of crew members. Most resigned, three of them managers; the rest were sacked. These crew members weren't allowed a fair hearing, whether to voice their grievances or to defend themselves from false accusations.

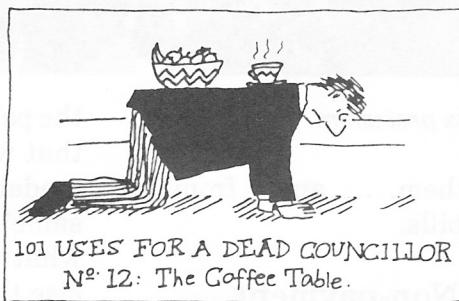
On his lone quest of self-gratification and heroism Captain Muldoon forgets two important facts. Who built the Empire to what it is now? And whose money keeps it afloat? Admiral Hajira Khote (chair of Hackney Leisure Committee) along with kiss me councillor Tommy Sheppard hands out our money, £25,000 of it, with a chorus of yo ho ho and another bottle of rum. No doubt councillors drinking in the Empire after hours helps with the grant.

The Hackney Empire belongs to the people of Hackney and everyone wants to see it sail on, but without a megalomaniac at the helm. If it doesn't change captain now, then the Jolly Roger will continue to fly from its mast.

POST BOX

Dear Heckler

I am at present squatting in the Trowbridge Estate. Although this is the first time that I have had to resort to such action, I find that there is little option when it comes to finding somewhere to live.



On this estate the council are evicting squatters, and sending workers to the now empty flat to devastate it by taking out electrics, water supply, etc. How much do you think it costs to send people to do this vandalism, and who do you think is paying for it?

It seems wasteful to me when a council property is squatted by people who truly want to live there, and then for that same council to evict them, making the place uninhabitable, so that nobody can live there.

I charge the council with gross misuse of public funding, criminal negligence and being a pack of pompous, misunderstanding, stupidly arrogant fools.

Anon.

FOOTBALL CRAZY

Crowds at football matches have consistently gone down since the war, when attendances were twice as high. Ordinary fans are treated with contempt by those who run the game. The latest idea of all-seater stadiums has been around for years, the argument being that it would deter hooliganism; but this argument was totally discredited by the emergence of hooligans in seats.

Since Hillsboro', where people were crushed to death when overcrowded into a small area of terracing by the police, they argue that seats will be safer. They weren't saying this after Bradford, where people in the seats died in a fire a few years ago.

Most people prefer to stand, but the people who run the game want more money from fewer fans, for football to go up-market, pricing out ordinary fans who don't want to sit down in uncomfortable seats and pay more.

Spurs built more seats and executive boxes, bought top players like Gazza and Lineker — everything to please the experts, and are going bust!

Ordinary fans are allowed no say in the way football is run, and the people running football are ruining it. Crowds are likely to decrease further while the game is run by an out-of-touch rich minority.

WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

On 16th January war started in the Gulf. It is impossible to know how many people have been slaughtered but it is definitely tens of thousands, possibly hundreds of thousands.

Parts of Iraq and Kuwait have been reduced to rubble. The human costs of this war can only grow, despite all their promises of a short war.

Saddam Hussein received military aid from the western powers throughout the 70s and 80s. This was because he was acting in their interests in keeping the lid of working class struggle in the Gulf. But when Saddam invaded Kuwait the world's most hated copper, America, put its foot down and got up a large army under the UN banner to show Saddam who his boss was.

The Home-front

In Britain the government has been using the war to turn the screw on us, the working class. 7,500 hospital beds have been set aside for war-wounded from a Health Service which already has a two year waiting list for essential operations. It's not that we'd begrudge the young squaddies a hos-



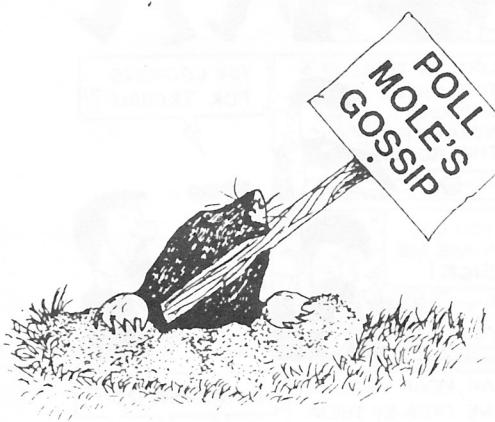
Sabotage the war effort

pital bed, but why can't they commandeer private hospitals? In Hackney 150 empty council flats have been set aside for families to visit injured soldiers in London hospitals while Hackney Council prepares to evict hundreds of families in the borough in an attack on "squatters". We give our blood in their war and they still want more.

The best way we can support our boys and girls in the Gulf is to stop the war. (World War One ground to a halt as a result of uprisings in Russia,

Hungary, Germany, Ireland, Britain and elsewhere.) We can organise against the war drive in our workplaces and on the streets. We must speak out against the false patriotism that sends our relatives and friends to their graves in a bosses' war. All our lives we are offered empty choices: in this case the Iraqi ruling class or that of the West.

There's a different choice — a war to end all wars — THE CLASS WAR!!



In the interests of popular participation in the democratic process the Hackney Poll Tax Office have informed us of the home addresses and phone numbers of the directors of Rayner Ferrar & Co, the bailiffs firm used by Hackney Council: David Westley lives at 51 Ladygate Lane, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 (tel 0895 632983) and Anthony Downsett lives at 44 The Spinney, Chesham, Bucks

(tel 0494 771335). Thanks for the information!

The Poll Tax Office also inform us that the council are very worried that even more people aren't going to pay next year either. People are seeing that the only way to stop it is not to pay it. You know it makes sense, as they say!

The next national demonstration against the poll tax is going to be on Saturday 23rd March, starting from the Embankment at noon. It should be a good chance to show the council and the government that they can stuff the poll tax where it belongs — in the dustbin of history.

Another present from the council (on top of the poll tax) is that come April rents are going up. Considering the state most council places are in, they've got a nerve charging rent at all, let alone putting it up. As Hamlet would have said (had he lived in a council place in Hackney) "to pay or not to pay, that is the question".

Hackney Heckler is a bi-monthly, free news-sheet produced by the HACKNEY SOLIDARITY GROUP.

We all live or work in the Borough and are sick of what we see around us. That's the aim of the Heckler: to encourage struggle for a decent life for all. We welcome contributions, donations, reports and help with distribution (we currently get rid of 10,000).

What's happening on your estate? Which councillors are corrupt? Who's the worst boss in Hackney?

Write to us at Hackney Heckler, c/o PO Box 824. London, N1 9DL. Our next issue will be May 1991.

ANTI-SOCIAL WORKERS

What's the difference between a Rottweiler and a social worker? It's easier to get your kids back from a Rottweiler.

But what's the difference between a bogus social worker and a real one? You get more visits from a bogus social worker.

Social Services is one of the main areas that have been cut back due to cuts in funding from Westminster but we don't think this is a major tragedy.

The only job social workers do in Hackney is "child protection", commonly known as kid snatching. Do they focus on children because they are genuinely concerned about their welfare? The main reason why the state "protects" children is because they are the next generation of workers and they need them to do crap jobs.

Social workers are supposed to help people suffering from mental dis-

tress, elderly people and disabled people. But what can they offer with so little money from Hackney council? The best they can manage is a home help, meals on wheels and "a little rest" down Hackney Hospital.

No begging

We can do without begging at Social Services and explaining our needs in front of the waiting-room audience. We don't need social workers gently tapping on our doors telling us how to run our lives. Social workers usually haven't got a clue how we live.

What we need is decent homes with affordable rents and the right to live there as long as we choose. We need

enough money not just to survive but to enjoy life. We need to be able to live in the type of families we want, not just Oxo cube families.

We do need control of our lives and support from each other so if something goes wrong, we can get some help to sort it out. Social workers are just another way the state divides us by telling us society is all right, it's us who are the problem. This is not true. Social workers think that anyone who doesn't live in a "normal" family is deviant even though 54% of the British population don't live in "nuclear" families.

Anti-social workers only work on the symptoms of living in this society and do not want to change it. This "Caring Profession" is really a CONTROLLING profession.



To be Continued...
If you can't wait for the next instalment, send £2 to Attack International, BM 6577, London WC1N 3XX, for the full-length cartoon book *The Adventures of Tintin: Breaking Free*.

This news-sheet is produced by HACKNEY SOLIDARITY GROUP